

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXVII.

JULY-AUGUST, 1918

Nos. 2-3

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.

Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class
mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

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ODE SUNG IN THE TOWN HALL,

CONCORD, JULY 4, 1857.

Oh, tenderly the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire;
One morn is in the mighty heaven,
And one in our desire.

The cannon booms from town to town,
Our pulses are not less,
The joy-bells chime their tidings down,
Which children's voices bless.

For he that flung the broad blue fold
O'er mantling land and sea,
One-third part of the sky unrolled
For the banner of the free.

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal state,—
To take the statute from the mind,
And make of duty fate.

United States! the ages plead,—
Present and Past in under-song,—
So put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue.

For sea and land don't understand,
Nor skies without a frown
See rights for which the one hand fights
By the other cloven down.

Be just at home; then write your scroll
Of honor o'er the sea,
And bid the broad Atlantic roll,
A ferry of the free.

And, henceforth, there shall be no chain,
Save underneath the sea
The wires shall murmur through the main
Sweet songs of LIBERTY.

The conscious stars accord above,
The waters wild below,
And under, through the cable wove,
Her fiery errands go.

For he that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

MILLY'S STORY.

"Well, well, you see, chile," said Milly, her large, dark eyes fixing themselves on vacancy, and speaking in a slow and dreamy voice, "a body's life, in dis yer world, is a mighty strange thing! You see, chile, my mother—well, dey brought her from Africa; my father, too. Heaps and heaps my mother has told me about dat ar. Dat ar was a mighty fine country, where dey had gold in the rivers, and such great, big, tall trees, with de strangest beautiful flowers on them you ever did see! Laws, laws! well, dey brought my mother and my father into Charleston, and dere Mr. Campbell,—dat was your ma's father, honey,—he bought dem right out of de ship; but dey had five children, and dey was all sold, and dey never knowed where they went to. Father and mother couldn't speak a word of English when dey come ashore; and she told me often how she couldn't speak a word to nobody, to tell 'em how it hurt her.

"Laws, when I was a chile, I 'member how often, when de day's work was done, she used to come out and sit and look up at

de stars, and groan, groan, and groan! I was a little thing, playing round; and I used to come up to her, dancing, and saying,

"Mammy, what makes you groan so? what's de matter of you?"

"Matter enough, chile!" she used to say. 'T's a thinking of my poor children. I likes to look at the stars, because dey sees the same stars dat I do. 'Pears like we was in one room; but I don't know where dey is! Dey don't know where I be!

"Den she'd say to me:—

"Now, chile, you may be sold away from your mammy. Der's no knowing what may happen to you, chile; but, if you gets into any trouble, as I does, you mind, chile, you ask God to help you."

"Who is God, mammy," says I, "anyhow?"

"Why, chile," says she, "he made dese yer stars."

"And den I wanter mammy to tell me more about it; only she says,—

"He can do anything he likes; and, if ye are in any kind of trouble, he can help you."

"Well, to be sure, I didn't mind much about it—all dancing round, because pretty well don't need much help. But she said dat ar to me so many times, I couldn't help 'member it. Chile, troubles will come; and, when dey does come, you ask God, and he will help you."

"Well, sure enough, I wasn't sold from her, but she was took from me, because Mr. Campbell's brother went off to live in Orleans, and parted de hands. My father and mother was took to Orleans, and I was took to Virginny. Well, you see, I grewed up along with de young ladies,—your ma, Miss Harrit, Miss Loo, and de rest on 'em,—and I had heaps of fun. Dey all like Milly. Dey couldn't nobody run, nor jump, nor ride a horse, nor row a boat, like Milly; and so it was Milly here, and Milly dere, and whatever de young ladies wanted, it was Milly made de way for it."

"Well, dere was a great difference among dem young ladies. Dere was Miss Loo—she was de prettiest, and she had a great many beaux; but, den, dere was your ma—everybody loved her; and den dere was Miss Harrit—she had right smart of life in her, and was always for *doing* something—always right busy, tending to something or other, and she liked me because I'd always go in with her. Well, well! dem dar was pleasant times enough; but when I got to be about fourteen or fifteen, I began to feel kind o' bad—sort of strange and heavy. I really didn't know why, but 'peared like's when I got older, I felt I was in bondage."

"Member one day your ma came in, and

seed me looking out of window, and she says to me,—

"Milly, what makes you so dull lately?"

"O," says I, "I, somehow, I don't have good times."

"Why?" says she; "why not? Don't everybody make much of you, and don't you have everything that you want?"

"O, well," says I, "missis, I's a poor slave-girl, for all dat."

"Chile, your ma was a weety thing, like you. I 'member just how she looked dat minute. I felt sorry, 'cause I thought I'd hurt her feelings. But says she:—

"Milly, I don't wonder you feel so. I know I should feel so, myself, if I was in your place."

"Afterwards, she told Miss Loo and Miss Harrit; but dey laughed, and said dey-guessed der wasn't many girls who were as well off as Milly. Well, den, Miss Harrit, she was married de first. She married Mr. Charles Blair; and when she was married, nothing was to do but she must have me to go with her. I liked Miss Harrit; but, den, honey, I'd liked it much better if it had been your ma. I'd always counted that I wanted to belong to your ma, and I think your ma wanted me; but, den, she was still, and Miss Harrit she was one of the sort dat never lost nothing by not asking for it. She was one of de sort dat always *got things*, by hook or by crook. She always had more clothes, and more money, and more everything, dan the rest of them, 'cause she was always wide awake, and looking out for herself."

"Well, Mr. Blair's place was away off in another part of Virginny, and I went dere with her. Well, she wa'n't very happy, no ways, she wa'n't; because Mr. Blair, he was a high fellow."

"Well, dis made a great change in Miss Harrit. She didn't laugh no more; she got sharp and cross, and she wa'n't good to me like what she used to be. She took to be jealous of me and her husband. She might have saved herself de trouble. I shouldn't have touched him with a pair of tongs. But he was always running after every thing that came in his way; so no wonder. But, 'tween them both, I led a bad life of it."

"Well, things dragged kind along in this way. She had three children, and, at last, he was killed, one day, falling off his horse when he was too drunk to hold the bridle. Good riddance, too, I thought. And den, after he's dead, Miss Harrit, she seemed to grow more quiet like, and setting herself picking up what pieces and crumbs was left for her and de children. And I 'member she had one of her uncles dere a good man

days helping her in counting up de debts. Well, dey was talking one day in missis' room, and dere was a little light closet on one side, where I got set down to do some fine stitching; but dey was too busy in their accounts to think anything 'bout me. It seemed dat de place and de people was all to be sold off to pay de debts,—all 'cept a few of us, who were to go off with missis, and begin again on a small place,—and I heard him telling her about it.

"'While your children are small,' he says, 'you can live small, and keep things close, and raise enough on the place for ye all; and den you can be making the most of your property. Niggers is rising in de market. Since Missouri came in, they's worth double; and so you can just sell de increase of 'em for a good sum. Now, there's that black girl Milly, of yourn. You don't often see a girl of finer breed than she is,' says he, 'just as if 'd been a cow, you know. 'Have you got her a husband?'"

"'No,' said Miss Harrit; and then says she, 'I believe Milly is something of a coquette among the young men. She's never settled on anybody yet,' says she.

"'Well,' says he, 'that must be attended to, 'cause that girl's children will be an estate of themselves. Why, I've known women to have twenty! and her children wouldn't any of 'em be worth less than eight hundred dollars. There's a fortune at once. If dey's like her, dey'll be as good as cash in the market, any day. You can lend out and sell one, if you happen to be in any straits, just as soon as you can draw a note on the bank.'

"'I laid down my work dat minute, and thinks, says I, 'True as de Lord's in heaven I won't never be married in dis world!' And I cried 'bout it, off and on, all day, and dat night I told Paul 'bout it. He was de one you know. But Paul, he tried to make it all smooth. He guessed it wouldn't happen; he guessed missis would think better on't. At any rate, we loved each other, and why shouldn't we take as much comfort as we could? Well, I went to Miss Harrit, and told her just what I thought 'bout it. Allers had spoke my mind to Miss Harrit 'bout everything, and I wa'n't going to stop den. And she laughed at me, and told me not to cry 'fore I's hurt. Well, things went on so two or three weeks, and finally Paul he persuaded me. And so we was married. When our first child was born, Paul was so pleased, he thought strange dat I wa'n't.

"'Paul,' said I, 'dis yer child an't ourn; it may be took from us, and sold, any day.'

"'Well, well,' says he, 'Milly, it may be God's child, any way, even if it an't ourn.'

"Ah, well, honey, I can't tell you; after dat I had a great many chil'en, girls and boys, growing up round me. Well, I's had fourteen chil'en, dear, and dey's all been sold from me, every single one of 'em. Lord, it's a heavy cross! heavy, heavy! None knows but dem dat bears it!

"Chile, chile," said Milly, "we doesn't none of us know what's in us. When Miss Harrit and I was gals together, hunting hens' eggs and rowing de boat in de river,—well, I wouldn't have thought it would have been so, and she wouldn't have thought so, neither. But, den, what little's bad in girls when dey's young and handsome, and all de world smiling on 'em—O, honey, it gets drefful strong when dey gets grown women, and de wrinkles comes in der faces! Always, when she was a girl,—whether it was eggs, or berries, or chincapins, or what,—it was Miss Harrit's nature to *get* and to *keep*; and when she got old, dat all turned to money.

"Ah, ah, honey! ladies-born have some bad stuff in dem, sometimes, like de rest of us. But, den, honey, it was de most natural thing in de world, come to look on't; for now, see here, honey, dere was your aunt—she was poor, and she was pestered for money. Dere was Mas'r George's bills and Peter's bills to pay, and Miss Susy's; and every one of 'em must have everything, and dey was all calling for money, money; and dere has been times she didn't know which way to turn. Now, you see, when a woman is pestered to pay two hundred here and tree hundred dere, and when she has got more niggers on her place dan she can keep, and den a man calls in and lays down eight hundred dollars in gold and bills before her, and says, 'I want dat ar Lucy or George of yourn,' why, don't you see? Dese yer soul-drivers is always round, tempting folks dey know is poor; and dey always have der money as handy as de devil has his. But, den, I oughn't fur to be hard upon dem poor soul-drivers, neither, 'cause dey an't taught no better. It's dese yer Christians, dat profess Christ, dat makes great talks 'bout religion, dat has der Bibles, and turns der backs upon swearing soul-drivers, and tinks dey an't fit to speak to—it's *dem*, honey, dat's de root of de whole business. Now, dere was dat uncle of hern,—mighty great Christian he was, with his prayer-meetings, and all dat!—he was always a-putting her up to it. O, dere's been times—dere was times 'long first, when my first chil'en was sold—dat, I tell you, I poured out my soul to Miss Harrit, and I've seen dat ar woman cry so dat I was

sorry for her. And she said to me, 'Milly, I'll never do it again.' But, Lord! I didn't trust her,—not a word on't,—'cause I knowed she would. I knowed dere was dat in her heart dat de devil wouldn't let go of. I knowed he'd no kind of objection to her 'musing herself with meetin's, and prayers, and all dat; but he'd no notion to let go his grip on her heart.

"But, Lord! she wasn't *quite* a bad woman,—poor Miss Harrit wasn't,—and she wouldn't have done so bad, if it hadn't been for *him*. But he'd come and have prayers, and exhort, and den come prowling round my place like a wolf, looking at my chil'en.

"'And, Milly,' he'd say, 'how do you do now? Lucy is getting to be a right smart girl, Milly. How old is she? Dere's a lady in Washington has advertised for a maid,—a nice woman, a pious lady. I suppose you wouldn't object, Milly? Your poor mistress is in great trouble for money.'

"I never said nothing to that man. Only once, when he asked me what I thought my Lucy would be worth, when she was fifteen years old, says I to him,—

"'Sir, she is worth to me just what your daughter is worth to you.'

"Den I went in and shut de door. I didn't stay to see how he took it. Den he'd go up to de house, and talk to Miss Harrit. 'Twas her duty, he'd tell her, to take proper care of her goods. And dat ar meant selling my chil'en! I 'member, when Miss Susy came home from boarding-school, she was a pretty girl; but I didn't look on her very kind, I tell you, 'cause three of my chil'en had been sold to keep her at school. My Lucy,—ah, honey!—she went for a lady's maid. I knowed what dat ar meant, well enough. De lady had a son grown, and he took Lucy with him to Orleans, and dere was an end of dat. Dere don't no letters go 'tween us. Once gone, we can't write, and it is good as being dead. Ah, no, chile, not so good! Paul used to teach Lucy little hymns, nights, 'fore she went to sleep. And if she'd a died right off after one of dem, it would have been better for her. O, honey, 'long dem times, I used to rave and toss like a bull in a net—I did so!

"Well, honey, I wasn't what I was. I got cross and ugly. Miss Harrit, she grew a great Christian, and joined de church, and used to have heaps of ministers and elders at her house; and some on 'em used to try and talk to me. I told 'em I'd seen enough of der old religion, and I didn't want to hear no more. But Paul, he was a Christian; and when he talked to me, I was quiet, like,

though I couldn't be like what he was. Well, last, my missis promised me one. She'd give me my youngest child, sure and certain. His name was Alfred. Well, dat boy!—I loved dat child better dan any of de rest of 'em. He was all I'd got left to love; for, when he was a year old, Paul's master moved away down to Louisiana, and took him off, and I never heard no more of him. So it 'peared as if dis yer child was all I had left. Well, he *was* a bright boy. O, he was most uncommon! He was so handy to anything, and saved me so many steps! O, honey, he had such ways with him—dat boy!—would always make me laugh. He took after larnin' mighty, and he larned himself to read; and he'd read de Bible to me, some times. I just brought him up and teached him de best way I could. All dat made me 'fraid for him was, dat he was so spirity. I's 'fraid 't would get him into trouble.

"He wan't no more spirity dan white folks would like der chil'en fur to be. When white children holds up der heads, and answers back, den de parents laugh, and say, 'He's got it in him! He's a bright one! But, if one of ourn does so, it's a drefful thing. I was allers talking to Alfred 'bout it, and telled him to keep humble. It 'peared like there was so much in him, you couldn't keep it down. Folks may say what dey like about de black folks, dey'll never beat it out of my head;—dere's some on 'em can be as smart as any white folks, if dey could have de same chance. How many white boys did you ever see would take de trouble for to teach their selves to read? And dat's what my Alfred did. Laws, I had a mighty heap of comfort in him, 'cause I was thinkin' to get my missis to let me hire my time; den I was going to work over hours, and get money, and buy him; because, you see, chile, I knowed he was too spirity for a slave. You see he couldn't *learn to stoop*; he wouldn't let nobody impose on him; and he always had a word back again to give anybody as good as dey sent. Yet, for all dat, he was a dear, good boy to me; and when I used to talk to him, and tell him dese things was dangerous, he'd always promise fur to be kerful. Well, things went on pretty well while he was little, and I kept him with me till he got to be about twelve or thirteen years old. He used to wipe de dishes, and scour de knives, and black de shoes, and such-like work. But, by and by, dey said it was time dat he should go to de reg'lar work; an dat ar was de time I felt feared. Missis had an overseer, and he was real aggravating, and I felt feared dere'd be trouble; and sure enough dere

was, too. Dere was always somethin' brewing between him and Alfred; and he was always running to missis with tales, and I was talking to Alfred. But 'peared like he aggravated de boy so, dat he couldn't do right. Well, one day, when I had been up to town for an errand, I come home at night, and I wondered Alfred didn't come home to his supper. I thought something was wrong; and I went to de house, and dere sat Miss Harrit by a table covered with rolls of money, and dere she was a counting it.

"'Miss Harrit,' says I, 'I can't find Alfred. An't you seen him?' says I.

"At first she didn't answer, but went on counting—fifty-one, fifty-two, fifty-three. Finally I spoke again.

"'I hope dere an't nothing happened to Alfred, Miss Harrit?'

"She looked up, and says she to me,—

"'Milly,' says she, 'de fact is, Alfred has got too much for me to manage, and I had a great deal of money offered for him; and I sold him.'

"I felt something strong coming up in my throat, and I just went up and took hold of her shoulders, and said I,

"'Miss Harrit, you took de money for thirteen of my chil'en, and you promised me, sure enough, I should have dis yer one. You call dat being a Christian?' says I.

"'Why,' says she, 'Milly, he an't a great way off; you can see him about as much. It's only over to Mr. Jones's plantation. You can go and see him, and he can come and see you. And you know you didn't like the man who had the care of him here, and thought he was always getting him into trouble.'

"'Miss Harrit,' says I, 'you may cheat yourself saying dem things; but you don't cheat me, nor de Lord neither. You folks have de say all on your side, with your ministers preaching us down out of de Bible; you won't teach us to read. But I'm going straight to de Lord with dis yer case. I tell you, if de Lord is to be found, I'll find him; and I'll ask him to look on't,—de way you've been treating me,—selling *my* chil'en, all de way 'long, to pay for *your* chil'en, and now breaking your word to me, and taking dis yer boy, de last drop of blood in my heart! I'll pray de Lord to curse every cent of dat ar money to you and your chil'en!'

"Dat ar was de way I spoke to her. I was poor, ignorant cretur, and didn't know God, and my heart was like a red-hot coal. I turned and walked right straight out from her. I didn't speak no more to her, and she didn't speak no more to me. And when I went to bed at night, dar, sure 'nough, was Alfred's

bed in de corner, and his Sunday coat hanging up over it, and his Sunday shoes I had bought for him with my own money; 'cause he was a handsome boy, and I wanted him always to look nice. Well, so, come Sunday morning, I took his coat and his shoes, and made a bundle of 'em, and I took my stick, and says I, 'I'll just go over to Jones's place and see what has 'come of Alfred.' All de time, I hadn't said a word to missis, nor she to me. Well, I got about half-way over to de place, and dere I stopped under a big hickory-tree to rest me a bit, and I looked along and seed some one a coming; and pretty soon I knowed it was Huldah. She was one that married Paul's cousin, and she lived on Jones's place. And so I got up and went to meet her, and told her I was going over to see 'bout Alfred.

"'Lord!' says she. 'Milly, haven't you heard dat Alfred's dead?'

"Well, it seemed as if my heart and everything in it stopped still. And said I, 'Huldah, has dey killed him?'

"And said she, 'Yes.' And she told me it was dis yer way: Dat Stiles—he dat was Jones's overseer—had heard dat Alfred was dreadful spirty; and when boys is so, sometimes dey aggravates 'em to get 'em riled, and den dey whips 'em to break 'em in. So Stiles, when he was laying off Alfred's task, was real aggravating to him; and dat boy—well, he answered back, just as he allers would be doing, 'cause he was smart, and it 'peared like he couldn't keep it in. And den dey all laughed round dere, and den Stiles was mad, and swore he'd whip him; and den Alfred, he cut and run. And den Stiles he swore awful at him, and he told him to 'come here, and he'd give him hell, and pay him de cash.' Dem is de very words he said to my boy. And Alfred said he wouldn't come back; he wasn't going to be whipped. And just den young Master Bill come along, and wanted to know what was de matter. So Stiles told him, and he took out his pistol, and said, 'Here, young dog, if you don't come back before I count five, I'll fire!'

"'Fire ahead!' says Alfred; 'cause, you see, dat boy never knowed what fear was. And so he fired. And Huldah said he just jumped up and give one scream, and fell flat. And dey run up to him, and he was dead; 'cause, you see, de bullet went right through his heart. Well, dey took off his jacket and looked, but it wa'n't of no use; his face settled down still. And Huldah said dat dey just dug a hole and put him in. Nothing on him—nothing round him—no coffin; like he'd been a dog. Huldah showed

me de jacket. Dere was de hole, cut right round in it, like it was stamped, and his blood running out on it. I didn't say a word. I took up de jacket, and wrapped it up with his Sunday clothes, and I walked straight—straight home. I walked up into missis' room, and she was dressed for church, sure enough, and sat dere reading her Bible. I laid it right down under her face, dat jacket. 'You see dat *hole!*' said I; 'you see dat blood! Alfred's killed! *You* killed him; his blood be on you and your chil'en! O, Lord God in heaven, hear me, and *render unto her double!*'"

Milly had drawn herself up, in the vehemence of her narration, and sat leaning forward, her black eyes dilated, her strong arms clenched before her, and her powerful frame expanding and working with the violence of her emotion. She might have looked, to one with mythological associations, like the figure of a black marble Nemesis in a trance of wrath. She sat so for a few minutes, and then her muscles relaxed, her eyes gradually softened. "Dem was awful words, chile; but I was in Egypt den. I was wandering in de wilderness of Sinai. I had heard de sound of de trumpet, and de voice of words; but, chile, I hadn't seen de Lord. Well—I went out, and I didn't speak no more to Miss Harrit. Dere was a great gulf fixed 'tween us; and dere didn't no words pass over it. I did my work—I scorned not to do it; but I didn't speak to her. Den it was, chile, dat I thought of what my mother told me, years ago; it came to me, all fresh—'Chile, when trouble comes, you ask de Lord to help you;' and I saw dat I hadn't asked de Lord to help me; and now, says I to myself, de Lord can't help me; 'cause he couldn't bring back Alfred, no way you could fix it; and yet I wanted to find de Lord, 'cause I was so tossed up and down. I wanted just to go and say, 'Lord, you see what dis woman has done.' I wanted to put it to him, if he'd stand up for such a thing as that. Lord, how de world, and everything, looked to me in dem times! Everything goin' on in de way it did; and dese yer Christians, dat said dat dey was going into de kingdom, doing as dey did! I tell you, I sought de Lord early and late. Many nights I have been out in de woods and laid on de ground till morning, calling and crying, and 'peared like nobody heerd me. O, how strange it used to look, when I looked up to de stars! winking at me, so kind of still and solemn, but never saying a word! Sometimes I got dat wild, it seemed as if I could tear a hole through de sky, 'cause I must find God; I had an errand to him, and I must find him.

"Den I heerd 'em read out de Bible, 'bout how de Lord met a man on a threshing-floor, and I thought maybe if I had a threshing-floor he would come to me. So I threshed down a place just as hard as I could under de trees; and den I prayed dere—but he didn't come. Den dere was coming a great camp-meeting; and I thought I'd go and see if I could find de Lord dere; because, you see, missis, she let her people go Sunday to de camp-meeting. Well, I went into de tents and heerd dem sing; and I went afore de altar, and I heerd preaching; but it 'peared like it was no good. It didn't touch me nowhere; and I couldn't see nothing to it. I heerd 'em read out of de Bible: 'O, dat I knew where I might find him. I would come even to his seat. I would ordere my cause before him. I would fill my mouth with arguments;' and I thought, sure enough, dat ar's just what I wanted. Well, came on dark night, and dey had all de camp-fires lighted up, and dey was singing de hymns round and round, and I went down to hear de preaching. And dere was a man—pale, lean man he was, with black eyes and black hair. Well, dat ar man, he preached a sermon, to be sure, I never shall forget. His text was, 'He that spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?' Well, you see, the first sound of dis took me, because I'd lost my son. And de man, he told us who de Son of God was,—Jesus,—O, how sweet and beautiful he was! How he went round doing for folks. O, Lord, what a story dat ar was! And, den, how dey took him, and put de crown of thorns on his head, and hung him up bleeding, bleeding, and bleeding! God so loved us dat he let his own dear Son suffer all dat for us. Chile, I got up, and I went to de altar, and I kneeled down with de mourners; and I fell flat on my face, and dey said I was in a trance. Maybe I was. Where I was, I don't know; but I saw de Lord! Chile, it seemed as if my very heart was still. I saw him, suffering, bearing with us, year in and year out—bearing—bearing—bearing so patient! 'Peared like, it wa'n't just on de cross; but bearing always, everywhere! O, chile, I saw how he loved us—us *all*—all—every one on us!—we dat hated each other so! 'Peared like he was using his heart up for us, all de time—bleedin' for us like he did on Calvary, and willin' to bleed! O, chile, I saw what it was for me to be hatin' like I'd hated. 'O, Lord,' says I, 'I give up! O, Lord, I never see you afore! I didn't know. Lord, I's a poor sinner! I won't hate no more!' And O, chile, den dere come

such a rush of love in my soul! Says I, 'Lord, I ken love even de white folks!' And den came another rush; and says I, 'Yes, Lord, I love poor Miss Harrit, dat's sole all my chil'en, and been de death of my poor Alfred! I loves her.' Chile, I overcome—I did so—I overcome by de blood of de Lamb—de Lamb!—Yes, de Lamb, chile!—cause if he'd been a lion I could a kept in; 'twas de Lamb dat overcome.

"When I come to, I felt like a chile. I went home to Miss Harrit; and I hadn't spoke peaceable to her since Alfred died. I went in to her. She'd been sick, and she was in her room, looking kinder pale and waller, poor thing; 'cause her son, honey, he got drunk and 'bused her awful. I went in, and says I, 'O, Miss Harrit, I's seen de Lord! Miss Harrit, I an't got no more hard feelin's; I forgive ye, and loves ye with all my heart, just as de Lord does.' Honey, ye ought to see how dat woman cried! Says she, 'Milly, I's a great sinner.' Says I, 'Miss Harrit, we's sinners, both on us, but de Lord gives himself for us both; and if he loves us poor sinners, we mustn't be hard on each other. Ye was tempted, honey,' says I (for you see I felt like makin' scuses for her); 'but de Lord Jesus has got a pardon for both on us.'

"After dat, I didn't have no more trouble with Miss Harrit. Chile, we was sisters in Jesus. I bore her burdens, and she bore mine. And, dear, de burdens was heavy; for her son he was brought home a corpse; he shot hisself right through de heart, trying to load a gun when he was drunk. O, chile, I thought den how I'd prayed de Lord to tender unto her double; but I had a better mind den. Ef I could have brought poor Mas'r George to life, I'd a done it; and I held de poor woman's head on my arm all dat ar night, and she a screamin' every hour. Well, dat ar took her down to de grave. She didn't live much longer; but she was ready to die. She sent and bought my daughter Lucy's son, dis here Tom, and gin him to me. Poor thing! she did all she could.

"I watched with her de night she died. O, ef ever ye're tempted to hate anybody, think now 't'll be with 'em when dey comes to die. "She died hard, poor thing! and she was cast down 'bout her sins. 'O, Milly,' says she, 'de Lord and you may forgive me, but I can't forgive myself.'

"And, says I to her, 'O, missis, don't think of it no more; de Lord's hid it in his own heart!' O, but she struggled long, honey; she was all night dyin', and 'twas 'Milly! Milly!' all the time; 'O, Milly, stay with me!'

"And, chile, I felt I loved her like my own soul; and when de day broke de Lord set her free, and I laid her down like she'd been one o' my babies. I took up her poor hand. It was warm, but the strength was all gone out on't; and, 'O,' I thought, 'ye poor thing, how could I ever have hated ye so?' Ah, chile, we mustn't hate nobody; we's all poor creaturs, and de dear Lord he loves us all." —From "*Dred*," by Harriet Beecher Stowe.

THE STILL HOUR.

LAW AND LOVE.

O Thou in whom we live and move,
Whose love is law, whose law is love,
Whose present spirit waits to fill
The soul that comes to do Thy will!

Unto our waiting spirits teach
Thy love beyond the power of speech,
And bid us feel with joyful awe
The omnipresence of Thy law.

That law doth give to truth and right,
Howe'er despised, a conquering might,
And makes each fondly cherished lie
And boasting wrong to cower and die.

Its patient working doth fulfil
Man's hope and God's all-perfect will,
Nor suffers one true word or thought
Or deed of love to come to naught.

Such faith, O God! our souls sustain
Free, true, and calm, in joy and pain,
That even by our fidelity
Thy kingdom may the nearer be!

—Samuel Longfellow.

We must not turn back into the darkness
because the light from God's face rests upon
a path of labor and sacrifice. We want the
portion of sons; nothing less will serve us.—
Rufus Ellis.

There is but one Comforter. Let us give
ourselves no rest until we have found Him
and are folded in His everlasting arms.—
Rufus Ellis.

The consciousness of power comes from
conquering obstacles. Hindrances are, after
all, our opportunities. God must regard our
struggle. And that he has a purpose in it
all we are forced to believe from the way he
treats us, and gives us all, at some time, a
battle to fight.—*Roderick Stebbins.*

O heart, that shrinkest back appalled,—
So fearful duty's way, and steep,—
Know that where'er God's voice hath called
His hand will keep!

—S. Longfellow.

If one man has more knowledge of God than another, it is not because God has been more kindly disposed to him, but because he has watched more intently for the divine message intended for all.—*Clement J. Strong.*

We want spiritual discernment, if we are to read the things of God. And to that end we must cultivate ourselves spiritually,—not neglect that part, and then deny all spiritual verities because we do not discern them; but cultivate our spirit nature, that we may discern. . . . By culture; long, deep, single, arduous inlook, outlook, uplook; windows open on every side, God's balmy air stealing in, our growing love outgoing toward God. Not in resolves and prayers and emotions only, but in daily overflow of sympathy and deed, we get the discerning power.

The crown of patience cannot be received where there has been no suffering. If thou refuseth to suffer thou refuseth to be crowned; but if thou wishest to be crowned thou must fight manfully and suffer patiently.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass. Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

REQUESTS.

1. I have been asked to mention our needs in *The Cheerful Letter*. My husband is chaplain of the Michigan State Prison, at Jackson. His parish numbers over twelve hundred men. A large number are young men. Many of the inmates enjoy good reading, and ask for more than we can supply. The majority ask for fiction. Since among these men are university graduates, and at least one minister, you can readily see that any good literature can be used here, while I can assure you of the appreciation and gratitude of these unfortunate men. One recently asked me for old D. A. R. papers. Our prisoners

are very patriotic, having subscribed liberally to the Liberty bonds, and many would be glad to go to the front and fight if the law permitted. "I was in prison and ye came unto me." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." To any who feel to respond to this need, may these promises be precious. Chaplain Grover A. Jackson, M.S.P., Jackson, Michigan.

2. I am the wife of a Methodist minister; president of two societies; teacher in Sunday-school of a class of fifteen girls from eight to twelve years of age; and have four little ones of my own,—boys aged twelve and thirteen years, girls, nine and seven. Our work is in a cotton-mill village; my husband preaches twice a month in two country churches and one other mill-town. Our population here is between six and seven hundred. My husband is the only minister who lives here, so we are kept quite busy, visiting the sick, conducting funerals, preaching, etc. Ours are mostly poor people who are laborers in the cotton-mills, yet they are very appreciative of every consideration shown them. Our salary is small, and I cannot afford all the magazines I should like to have, so am writing to ask if you can send me *The Mother's Magazine*. I think it is published by David Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, Illinois. It will help me so much in rearing my little ones. I should very much appreciate pictures, books, or papers suitable for my Sunday-school class. Hardly a day passes but what I am called upon for magazines or daily papers. Any help will be thankfully received. Address Mrs. N. B. Strickland, Swepsonville, North Carolina.

3. Mrs. J. M. Vannoy, Vannoy, North Carolina, has been an invalid for seven years. She asks for novels or magazines.

4. Please send me some pieces for patchwork. Also I should like some good reading, and story-books for my little girl Addie and little boy Harry. We should be very glad to receive these, as we are in a scattered neighborhood and seldom see any one. Anything would be appreciated. My grown son Richard has been called off to the Camps and that makes us still more lonely. I thank those who have remembered us in the past. Address Mrs. W. R. Eanes, Bassett, Virginia, R. F. D. 1.

5. I have moved to a little town named Kirby. There is no village store or post-office in the town, but a little Congregational

church—and only one; they have services there a part of the time." I find a large field where to work in as well as in St. Albans, Maine; many shut-ins and almost cripples who would like something to cheer them on their way. Also a lumber-camp is near, where they work winter and summer. I don't want to lose the chance to plan the work with you ladies, and wish to know if you can continue to work with me in my new field. I should especially like reading and music just now. Could use patchwork to good advantage, but good reading seems in greater demand. Address Mrs. Oscar S. Blaisdell, Lyndonville, Vermont, R. D. 1.

6. As I very much desire these two books I shall be very thankful if any one will send me one or both of them as follows: "The Soul of the Bible" and "The Creed of Epictetus." I wish the Khaki Pocket Edition, so that when I have read them I can send them to the men in the service; however, any edition will be acceptable. Address Charles W. Lockenour, Pekin, Indiana.

7. I thank those who have so kindly sent me reading since my last request was published. I have enjoyed it so much, so have others with whom I have shared it. It has helped me to pass many pleasant hours that would have otherwise been lonely. I hope they will continue to remember me, and I should be very grateful for any good novels or new magazines, especially the *Ladies' Home Journal*. I should also appreciate some cards, and scraps for patchwork. Address Grace M. Gilbert, Sandidges, Virginia.

8. Will some one send me a song-book, also some reading, for I live in the country and on rented land. I have four children, two girls and two boys, the oldest five years and the youngest four months old. I get lonely at times and I am fond of reading and not able to buy. Address Mrs. Oscar Jordan, Polkton, North Carolina, R. D. 3.

9. We are two little boys aged ten and seven years. We have come asking for some books, "Hiawatha" and "Stories of the Bible" and any other books suitable for children to read will be appreciated. Address Theron and Elbert Robertson, P.O. Woolwine, Virginia.

10. Minnie Turner, Dodson, Virginia, asks for *McCall's Magazine*.

11. Mrs. Roscie C. Sowell, Holladay, Virginia, Box 100, is a soldier's lonely wife and

asks for reading and samples of crocheting and tatting.

12. Miss Rilla Crisco, Oakboro, North Carolina, who is living with an elderly, feeble aunt, asks for reading and a correspondent.

NOTICE.

The Central Committee is asking the Cheerful Letter Branches to make War Scrap Books for our boys who are in the hospitals. These should be bright and cheerful and made not too bulky.

Please notify or send to the secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

A FEW NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT.

The reports of the year's work are so full of interest, I quote from different committees. One Branch reported in view of the urgent call for books and magazines for the cantonments and camps they had emphasized the appeal for children, which did not interfere with the sending of literature to the soldiers and yet met a real need in poor homes, where large families of little children are not supplied with books or even pictures.

Our Christmas work was carried on as usual, boxes finding their way to brave and industrious women who in the midst of their own busy lives try to make their poorer neighbors happier at Christmas-time by having children's trees. In one town in Maine nearly one hundred people were made happy through the kindly help of the Cheerful Letter friends.

One woman in the South writes that "the old ladies enjoyed the cards sent as much as the children"; that "we of the rural districts do not have much that is pretty; we never saw a Christmas card until you kind people began sending them to us." Three dozen new cards were sent to the Home for Crippled Children and used as place-cards Christmas morning.

Hands, too, have been stretched across the sea: in one Branch four women regularly corresponded with French and Belgian soldiers, constituting themselves their godmothers. In another Branch a lady introduced her Belgian refugee correspondent to her Cheerful Letter correspondent with happy results and mutual benefit. In still another Branch one thousand Christmas letters were sent to boys from their State serving at the front in France; calendars, cards of greeting, and a personal superscription and greeting were added to each letter, no typewriting

being allowed. Also personal letters containing home and church news were written to forty-seven of their boys serving their country. At Easter, greetings were sent to eighty-three Unitarian churches in Western United States, Canada, and the Northwest,—some twelve hundred picture post-cards well mounted on pasteboard, carefully sorted, grouped by States, cities, and localities, mounted as effectively and artistically as possible, and at the same time were sufficiently related to make their use of value in connection with history or geography lessons. These were sent to schools in the mountains.

Showing our right to exist, I give an extract from a letter from one of our old-time friends:—

The Cheerful Letter has meant and always will mean more to my family and myself than it is possible for me to express in words. Now to go back to the time, over three years ago, when the first copy was sent me by a dear, unselfish little lady in Portland, a stranger to me, who had just happened to hear of our isolated life, our struggles, etc., our love of reading. Picture if you can,—

“ a lonesome lodge
That stands so low in lonely glen
The little window dim and dark
Is hung with ivy, briar, and yew,”—

fourteen miles round trip to mail-box, over mountain and stream, by horse trail, twenty miles to nearest railroad; but fresh air, birds, and God's first churches, the woods, right at our door. No neighbors except the wild things of the forest; no music except the wind in treetop, the brook, and birds. Beautiful? Yes.

But when I tell you what few people it had been our lot to meet there, all having an entirely different viewpoint from any we had believed right, charitable, or just, you will perhaps understand that many an hour, especially in the rainy season and long winter evenings, found us very lonely, and—worse yet—somewhat cynical in regard to there being anybody in the world (as a rule) but what were selfish and grasping.

When the copy of *The Cheerful Letter* came, with the kind, encouraging letter, we thought at first it was some party who was trying to gain our confidence so as to find out and thwart our plans in regard to roads and school, as they were always trying, as they expressed it, to get the best of those home-steaders. That community, as you know, is mostly hunters and trappers, who were as opposed to any improvements as Indians. We were soon convinced of the sincerity

of all *The Cheerful Letter* offered, after my request for reading. How generously and lovingly that request has been granted! Why, that trip to mail-box, in rain, snow, mud, or sunshine was a pleasure, as we were *always* rewarded by all kinds of good,—good reading, nice, cheerful, encouraging, friendly letters. Really, I did not miss my lack of callers. Some bundles were like a trip to the movies,—all telling what was happening in the world. Wit, pictures, stories, science, invention, travel came to that “little lonesome lodge.” Ah, I wonder how we would have lived! You dear “C. L.”! You taught us what Christianity is, such cheerful, unselfish goodness! I cannot control my emotions when I think of you all, so far away, yet reaching out the helpful, sustaining hand to the lonely, the discouraged. How can I who have no gift of words express or write half what it all meant to us. It taught my boys a lesson in unselfishness. My husband was discouraged, thinking all the world was against every right, unselfish effort (as we in isolated places are apt to judge the universe by our immediate surroundings), and “C. L.” helped him to know there were many unselfishly cheering and helping such as he. And as for me, it is still speaking to me in a thousand ways, telling me of love, cheer, and real Christian lives. In fact, to all of us it is Love, Truth, and the kindest, most considerate Charity. If I could send you an X-ray of our hearts we could perhaps let you know all it has been and still is; but believe me, I am abashed when trying to express my grateful feelings. “Words come crowding up too deep for utterance.”

CARRIE B. FRYE.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

SHOULD MOTHER TRY TO ANSWER MARY'S
MILLION QUESTIONS?

The other day I was riding behind one of these little animated interrogation-points in a railway train. “Mamma, what does that man [the conductor] keep walking through the car for? What is that funny thing on the lady's face? What is that cow doing in the water? Who owns that little cow on the bank?” So the sweet, clear, compelling stream of inquiries rushed on. The mother answered each question briefly, patiently, absent-mindedly. But as I left the car and looked back I saw that she had a strained expression upon her face. Her excursion was not being a restful one. And as I thought that this sort of thing was going on hour by

hour and day by day, I felt a good deal of sympathy for the mother. But I also wished I had the authority and the courage to stop her, midstream, and ask her why she did not at once alter her conscientious but futile attitude.

The mother had a vague, well-meaning notion that her child ought to be enlightened by herself, but the child was not being enlightened. She was using a good deal of physical and a very little mental energy and was receiving a great many inadequate answers which she forgot as soon as she heard them.

Even upon a holiday ride it is possible for a mother to take advantage of certain very elementary laws of teaching in such a way as to inspire and stimulate the laudable curiosity of a child. She can also help her to learn how to think, and make the occasion useful and delightful both to mother and child.

The first thing to insist on is that the child ask one question at a time. Make her concentrate her attention for a little space to one subject. If she is interested in cows, let her look at cows long enough to learn something about them, without allowing herself to be distracted by the habits and ways of conductors.

The second thing is that the child be encouraged to endeavor to help answer her own questions. She will enjoy doing so and she will get more out of them if she tries.

So if the question is, "What is the cow doing in the water?" say to Mary, "Now you watch until you see some more cows in the water and look carefully and try to tell what they are there for." This will keep Mary eagerly looking out of the window. Pretty soon she will make a happy guess and probably a correct one. Let her mind be kept on cows for a time. She may count them if she knows how. She may watch for a pure white one. She may note what other colors she can find. She may try to draw some cows with the pencil and pad of paper that mother always takes on the train.

About the house, on the street, in the stores, this method should be used. Accept the child's point of interest, keep him to that as long as there is something of import in it, encourage him to investigate for himself. And after he gets home invite him to make a new knowledge his sure possession by telling about it to others.

The child whose questions are handled in this skilful way will be notable among other children for his keenness of perception, his good sense and his power of independent thinking.—By William Byron Forbush, Ph.D.

NATURAL HISTORY.

SEEING THINGS OUTDOORS.

The sun's rays are hottest in the northern half of the world at the end of June, but our days are warmest in July and August. This at first seems a paradox, but it is not. A man is not necessarily richest when he is earning most. Even though his receipts diminish, so long as they exceed his expenditures his wealth accumulates. We gain warmth from the sun while our part of the earth is turned toward him. But we are losing heat, throwing it back into space, all the time. During these long days we get more than we can throw away, and consequently we get warmer day by day.

With us, of course, the sun never gets directly overhead. If it did we should be in the torrid zone. But now it is daily farther south of the overhead point at noon, and we are getting its rays more and more slantingly, and hence getting less and less heat from them. By early August the income and outgo will balance, and from that time on we must constantly draw on our accumulations. These daily draughts on our store continue until late December, when they are heaviest. After that they grow daily less, for our income slowly increases. But it is not until February that our call on the reserve ceases and our fortunes reach their lowest ebb. From that time on we add daily to our store.

At this season of the year even the trees feel the heat. The leaves have lost their freshness and crispness. They are distinctly less green. This is no mere trick of the light, no simple appearance. The leaves actually move the grains that make them look green, and stand them edgewise to the sun to avoid its intense action. The trees have stopped growing, too, for the most part. Practically all the stretching they do comes between April and June. Later they fill out, but gain little in height. Their main work from that time on is to accumulate materials enough to make a quick stretch next spring. To this end, next year's buds are already formed. At the base of each leaf is the promise of the leaves for next year in the shape of a slender, pointed bud.

The birds particularly seem to feel the heat. Their songs have grown fewer and feebler. To be sure, they have accomplished their purpose, and when the male has gained his mate and helped to build the nest, there is work enough in gathering food for his wife and children to sober any father. Even yet his joy bubbles out morning and evening, but when the sun is high, the quiet, persistent

note of the wood pewee must stand for almost the whole choir of spring.

But whatever we and the birds may think of the weather these are just the days that suit the insects. The sun cannot shine with rays hot enough to scorch their ardor, and the hum of the bumblebee, the quick flight of the wasp that is building his mud hut under the eaves, and the buzz of the hornet as he searches for flies are the pleasant accompaniments of our summer lazings. Through the warm air the butterflies wheel almost secure from the birds who sit in the deep foliage with mouths open and wings held away from the body. Over the hot, dry ground of the cornfield the grasshopper hovers in crackling, quivering glee, while from the near-by grove the heavy hum of the locust starts out musically enough, though even it gets wooden toward the end of the song.

Toward evening the musicians change, but their numbers, if anything, increase. Denied the power of beauty, these denizens of the night must depend on their voices for winning friends, and the night is strident with the shrill fiddling of the crickets and later of the katydids.

It sounds hot when the locust sings. He never seems quite happy with the thermometer anywhere that pleases us. When we begin to wilt the locust tunes up his twin drums and sings his gleeful song. For here again it is the male that sings, and if you will but catch him you will find his instruments beneath the long flaps of his vest. If you will bend his body forward and back, at the waist, you can beat his drums at will. You need not hesitate to try this for he is in truth quite harmless. It is almost impossible for him to puncture the skin, and should he by any chance do so the result is far less likely to be hurtful than would be the case were you to puncture yourself with a pin that had been lying about a city street.

Of course we should call this fellow the cicada, but I fear in this country popular usage has called him locust so long that reform is hopeless. We have two insects of this kind. The one we see and hear every summer is broad over the shoulders and looks as if he were made of tarnished copper—he is such a motley of blacks and greens with a white blush here and there.

The other one has long been known as the seventeen-year locust. He is smaller and redder, and only comes, in any one locality, once in seventeen years. The truth of the matter is, it takes seventeen years to make him. Before his exact period had been recognized, his coming, like that of comets and all other unexpected events, was considered to

presage war. This was all the more clear inasmuch as his front wings carry a very plain W, and what else could this mean? We now know that during the sixteen intervening years he lives under ground, without wings, and thus escapes our notice.

The mother locust cuts light slits in the tender bark of the ends of the limbs of trees and in them lays her eggs. She thus injures the wood, and soon the twig dies and hangs down. The next high wind breaks it off and it falls to the earth. By this time the eggs have hatched, and the young locust, not yet looking at all like his mother, creeps into the earth. Here he goes through a very slow growth and development, feeding occasionally on tender roots. By the summer of the seventeenth year he is ready to emerge. He creeps out and up the tree until he finds a place into which he can clinch his toes. Then his back splits open, and the adult, form, tender and limp, squirms out and later hardens into the perfect insect.

In 1885 the southeastern half of Pennsylvania, and much of New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, swarmed with the largest brood of these locusts ever known. Indiana had a similar brood the same year. In the East these visits have been noticed regularly since 1715. In the first place very little can be done to prevent their advent; and in the next, these insects are not dangerous to people while the damage to trees is ordinarily quite trivial and confined chiefly to forest trees.

Spring flowers are coquettish; summer blooms frankly bid for attention. The faint, delicate pinks and violets and whites have given place to red and purple, to deep blue, to yellow and orange. When white comes now it is more likely to come in masses or at night, and if at night, then with a fulness and richness of perfume that is almost oppressive. I suppose each of us is most sensitive to our particular color, and I am barbaric enough to like it dark red. Of all the crops that grow in our fields none delights me more than crimson clover. Of all the flowers that brighten our woods and swamps none seem to me more cheering from its simple glow than the cardinal lobelia.

The swamps are the places where Nature is most active in reclaiming the ground. Almost always they are old lake beds or ponds that she has filled with soil and is now fertilizing in order that they may grow her crops. How gracious it is that she should cover her processes of decay, that are blackening and enriching the slime beneath, with the dainty carpet of ferns and mosses, and spot the surface here and there with such perfect patches of color as come from the graceful clusters of

the yellow-fringed orchid or from the tall, glowing spikes of the cardinal flower.

The little blue lobelia of the fields, with its inflated seed-pods, has long been used in medicine. But the best administration of lobelia is through the eye, and its most potent effect is on the mind.—*From the Ladies' Home Journal.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER.

South-West Wind, Esquire.

In a secluded and mountainous part of Stiria there was, in old time, a valley of the most surprising and luxuriant fertility. It was surrounded on all sides by steep and rocky mountains, rising into peaks which were always covered with snow, and from which a number of torrents descended in constant cataracts. One of these fell westward, over the face of a crag so high that when the sun had set to everything else, and all below was darkness, his beams still shone full upon this water-fall, so that it looked like a shower of gold. It was, therefore, called by the people of the neighborhood, the Golden River. It was strange that none of these streams fell into the valley itself. They all descended on the other side of the mountains, and wound away through broad plains and by populous cities. But the clouds were drawn so constantly to the snowy hills, and rested so softly in the circular hollow, that in time of drought and heat, when all the country round was burnt up, there was still rain in the little valley; and its crops were so heavy, and its hay so high, and its apples so red, and its grapes so blue, and its wine so rich, and its honey so sweet, that it was a marvel to every one who beheld it, and was commonly called the Treasure Valley.

The whole of this little valley belonged to three brothers, called Schwartz, Hans, and Gluck. Schwartz and Hans, the two elder brothers, were very ugly men, with overhanging eyebrows and small dull eyes, which were always half shut, so that you could not see into *them*, and always fancied they saw very far into *you*. They lived by farming the Treasure Valley, and very good farmers they were. They killed everything that did not pay for its eating. They shot the black-birds, because they pecked the fruit; and killed the hedgehogs, lest they should suck the cows; they poisoned the crickets for eating the crumbs in the kitchen; and smothered the cicadas, which used to sing

all summer in the lime-trees. They worked their servants without wages till they could not work any more, and then quarrelled with them, and turned them out of doors without paying them. It would have been very odd if with such a farm, and such a system of farming, they had not got very rich; and very rich they *did* get. They generally contrived to keep their corn by them till it was very dear, and then sell it for twice its value: they had heaps of gold lying about on their floors, yet it was never known that they had given so much as a penny or a crust in charity: they never went to mass, grumbled perpetually at paying tithes, and were, in a word, of so cruel and grinding a temper as to receive from all those with whom they had any dealings the nickname of the "Black Brothers."

The youngest brother, Gluck, was as completely opposed, in both appearance and character, to his seniors as could possibly be imagined or desired. He was not above twelve years old, fair, blue-eyed, and kind in temper to every living thing. He did not, of course, agree particularly well with his brothers, or, rather, they did not agree with *him*. He was usually appointed to the honorable office of turnspit when there was anything to roast, which was not often; for, to do the brothers justice, they were hardly less sparing upon themselves than upon other people. At other times he used to clean the shoes, floors, and sometimes the plates, occasionally getting what was left on them, by way of encouragement, and a wholesome quantity of dry blows, by way of education.

Things went on in this manner for a long time. At last came a very wet summer, and everything went wrong in the country around. The hay had hardly been got in when the haystacks were floated bodily down to the sea by an inundation, the vines were cut to pieces with the hail, the corn was all killed by a black blight; only in the Treasure Valley, as usual, all was safe. As it had rain when there was rain nowhere else, so it had sun when there was sun nowhere else. Everybody came to buy corn at the farm, and went away pouring maledictions on the Black Brothers. They asked what they liked, and got it, except from the poor people who could only beg, and several of whom were starved at their very door without the slightest regard or notice.

It was drawing toward winter, and very cold weather, when one day the two elder brothers had gone out, with their usual warning to little Gluck, who was left to mind the roast, that he was to let nobody in and give nothing out. Gluck sat down quite close to

the fire, for it was raining very hard, and the kitchen walls were by no means dry or comfortable-looking. He turned and turned, and the roast got nice and brown. "What a pity," thought Gluck, "my brothers never ask anybody to dinner. I am sure, when they have got such a nice piece of mutton as this, and nobody else has got so much as a piece of dry bread, it would do their hearts good to have somebody to eat it with them."

Just as he spoke there came a double knock at the house door, yet heavy and dull, as though the knocker had been tied up—more like a puff than like a knock.

"It must be the wind," said Gluck; "nobody else would venture to knock double knocks at our door."

No; it was not the wind: there it came again very hard, and, what was particularly astounding, the knocker seemed to be in a hurry, and not to be in the least afraid of the consequences. Gluck went to the window, opened it, and put his head out to see who it was.

It was the most extraordinary-looking little gentleman he had ever seen in his life. He had a very large nose, slightly brass-colored; his cheeks were very round and very red, and might have warranted a supposition that he had been blowing a refractory fire for the last eight-and-forty hours; his eyes twinkled merrily through long silky eyelashes; his moustaches curled twice round like a corkscrew on each side of his mouth; and his hair, of a curious mixed pepper-and-salt color, descended far over his shoulders. He was about four feet six in height, and wore a conical pointed cap of nearly the same altitude, decorated with a black feather some three feet long. His doublet was prolonged behind into something resembling a violent exaggeration of what is now termed a "swallow-tail," but was much obscured by the swelling folds of an enormous black, glossy-looking cloak, which must have been very much too long in calm weather, as the wind, whistling round the old house, carried it clear out from the wearer's shoulders to about four times his own length.

Gluck was so perfectly paralyzed by the singular appearance of his visitor, that he remained fixed without uttering a word, until the old gentleman, having performed another and more energetic concerto on the knocker, turned round to look after his fly-away cloak. In so doing he caught sight of Gluck's little yellow head jammed in the window, with his mouth and eyes very wide open indeed.

"Hello!" said the little gentleman, "that's

not the way to answer the door; I'm wet, let me in."

To do the little gentleman justice, he *was* wet. His feather hung down between his legs like a beaten puppy's tail, dripping like an umbrella; and from the ends of his moustaches, the water was running into his waistcoat pockets and out again like a mill-stream.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck, "I'm very sorry, but I really can't."

"Can't what?" said the old gentleman.

"I can't let you in, sir;—I can't, indeed; my brothers would beat me to death, sir, if I thought of such a thing. What do you want, sir?"

"Want?" said the old gentleman, petulantly. "I want fire, and shelter; and there is your great fire there blazing, crackling, and dancing on the walls with nobody to feel it. Let me in, I say; I only want to warm myself."

Gluck had had his head, by this time, so long out of the window, that he began to feel it was really unpleasantly cold, and when he turned and saw the beautiful fire rustling, and roaring and throwing long bright tongues up the chimney, as if it were licking its chops at the savory smell of the leg of mutton, his heart melted within him that it should be burning away for nothing. "He does not look *very* wet," said little Gluck; "I'll just let him in for a quarter of an hour." Round he went to the door and opened it; and as the little gentleman walked in there came a gust of wind through the house, that made the old chimneys totter.

"That's a good boy," said the little gentleman. "Never mind your brothers. I'll talk to them."

"Pray, sir, don't do any such thing," said Gluck. "I can't let you stay till they come, they'd be the death of me."

"Dear me," said the old gentleman, "I'm very sorry to hear that. How long may I stay?"

"Only till the mutton's done, sir," replied Gluck, "and it's very brown."

Then the old gentleman walked into the kitchen and sat himself down on the hob, with the top of his cap accommodated up the chimney, for it was a great deal too high for the roof.

"You'll soon dry there, sir," said Gluck, and sat down again to turn the mutton. But the old gentleman did *not* dry there; but went on drip, drip, dripping among the cinders, and the fire fizzed and sputtered and began to look very black and uncomfortable: never was such a cloak; every fold in it ran like a gutter.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck at length

after watching the water spreading in long, quicksilver-like streams over the floor for a quarter of an hour; "mayn't I take your cloak?"

"No, thank you," said the old gentleman.

"Your cap, sir?"

"I am all right, thank you," said the old gentleman, rather gruffly.

"But,—sir,—I'm very sorry," said Gluck, hesitatingly; "but—really, sir,—you're—putting the fire out."

"It'll take longer to do the mutton, then," replied his visitor, drily.

Gluck was very much puzzled by the behavior of his guest; it was such a strange mixture of coolness and humility. He turned away at the string meditatively for another five minutes.

"That mutton looks very nice," said the old gentleman at length. "Can't you give me a little bit?"

"Impossible, sir," said Gluck.

"I'm very hungry," continued the old gentleman: "I've had nothing to eat yesterday nor to-day. They surely couldn't miss a bit from the knuckle!"

He spoke in so very melancholy a tone, that it quite melted Gluck's heart. "They promised me one slice to-day, sir," said he; "I can give you that, but not a bit more."

"That's a good boy," said the old gentleman again.

Then Gluck warmed a plate and sharpened a knife. "I do not care if I do get beaten for it," thought he. Just as he had cut a large slice out of the mutton, there came a tremendous rap at the door. The old gentleman jumped off the hob as if it had suddenly become inconveniently warm. Gluck fitted the slice into the mutton again, with desperate efforts at exactitude, and ran to open the door.

"What did you keep us waiting in the rain for?" said Schwartz, as he walked in, throwing his umbrella in Gluck's face. "Ah! what for, indeed, you little vagabond?" said Hans, administering an educational box on the ear, as he followed his brother into the kitchen.

"Bless my soul!" said Schwartz, when he opened the door.

"Amen," said the little gentleman, who had taken his cap off, and was standing in the middle of the kitchen, bowing with the utmost possible velocity.

"Who's that?" said Schwartz, catching up a rolling-pin and turning to Gluck with a fierce frown.

"I don't know, indeed, brother," said Gluck, in great terror.

"How did he get in?" roared Schwartz.

"My dear brother," said Gluck, desperately, "he was *very* wet!"

The rolling-pin was descending on Gluck's head, but, at the instant, the old gentleman interposed his conical cap, on which it crashed with a shock that shook the water out of it all over the room. What was very odd, the rolling-pin no sooner touched the cap than it flew out of Schwartz's hand, spinning like a straw in a high wind, and fell into the corner at the further end of the room.

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Schwartz, turning upon him.

"What's your business?" snarled Hans.

"I'm a poor old man, sir," the little old gentleman began very modestly, "and I saw your fire through the window, and begged shelter for a quarter of an hour."

"Have the goodness to walk out again, then," said Schwartz. "We've quite enough water in our kitchen, without making it a drying-house."

"It is a cold day to turn an old man out in, sir; look at my gray hairs." They hung down to his shoulders, as I told you before.

"Ay!" said Hans, "there are enough of them to keep you warm. Walk!"

"I'm very, very hungry, sir; couldn't you spare me a bit of bread before I go?"

"Bread, indeed!" said Schwartz; "do you suppose we've nothing to do with our bread but to give it to such red-nosed fellows as you?"

"Why don't you sell your feather?" said Hans, sneeringly. "Out with you!"

"A little bit," said the old gentleman.

"Be off," said Schwartz.

"Pray, gentlemen."

"Off, and be hanged!" cried Hans, seizing him by the collar. But he had no sooner touched the old gentleman's collar than away he went after the rolling-pin, spinning round and round till he fell into the corner on the top of it. Then Schwartz was very angry, and ran at the old gentleman to turn him out; but he also had hardly touched him when away he went after Hans and the rolling-pin and hit his head against the wall as he tumbled into the corner. And so there they lay, all three.

Then the old gentleman spun himself round with velocity in the opposite direction; continued to spin until his long cloak was all wound neatly about him; clapped his cap on his head, very much on one side (for it could not stand upright without going through the ceiling), gave an additional twist to his corkscrew moustaches, and replied with perfect coolness: "Gentlemen, I wish you a very good morning. At twelve o'clock to-night I'll call again; after such a refusal of

hospitality as I have just experienced, you will not be surprised if that visit is the last I ever pay you."

"If ever I catch you here again," muttered Schwartz, coming, half-frightened, out of the corner—but before he could finish, the old gentleman had shut the house door behind him with a great bang; and there drove past the window, at the same instant, a wreath of ragged clouds that whirled and rolled away down the valley in all manner of shapes; turning over and over in the air; and melting away at last in a gush of rain.

"A very pretty business, indeed, Mr. Gluck!" said Schwartz. "Dish the mutton, sir. If ever I catch you at such a trick again—Bless me,—why, the mutton has been cut!"

"You promised me one slice, brother, you know," said Gluck.

"Oh! and you were cutting it hot, I suppose, and going to catch all the gravy. It'll be long before I promise you such a thing again. Leave the room, sir; and have the kindness to wait in the coal-cellar till I call you."

Gluck left the room, melancholy enough. The brothers ate as much mutton as they could, locked the rest in the cupboard, and proceeded to get very drunk after dinner.

Such a night as it was! Howling wind, and the rushing rain, without intermission. The brothers had just sense enough left to put up all the shutters and double-bar the door before they went to bed. They usually slept in the same room. As the clock struck twelve, they were both awakened by a tremendous crash. Their door burst open with a violence that shook the house from top to bottom.

"What's that?" cried Schwartz, starting up in his bed.

"Only I," said the little gentleman.

The two brothers sat up on their bolster and stared into the darkness. The room was full of water, and by a misty moonbeam which found its way through a hole in the shutter they could see in the midst of it an enormous foam globe spinning round and bobbing up and down like a cork, on which, as on a most luxurious cushion, reclined the little old gentleman, cap and all. There was plenty of room for it now, for the roof was off.

"Sorry to incommode you," said their visitor, ironically. "I'm afraid your beds are dampish; perhaps you had better go to your brother's room; I've left the ceiling on there."

They required no second admonition, but rushed into Gluck's room, wet through, and in an agony of terror.

"You'll find my card on the kitchen table," the old gentleman called after them. "Remember, the *last* visit."

"Pray heaven it may!" said Schwartz, shuddering. And the foam globe disappeared.

Dawn came at last, and the two brothers looked out of Gluck's little window in the morning. The Treasure Valley was one mass of ruin and desolation. The inundation had swept away trees, crops, and cattle, and left in their stead a waste of red sand and gray mud. The two brothers crept shivering and horror-struck into the kitchen. The water had gutted the whole first floor; corn, money, almost every movable thing had been swept away, and there was left only a small white card on the kitchen table. On it in large, breezy, long-legged letters were engraved the words:—

SOUTH-WEST WIND, ESQUIRE.

—John Ruskin.

(To be continued.)

ANTON LANG OF OBERAMMERGAU

While I was at home on a few weeks' visit in October, 1915, I read in the newspapers a simple announcement cabled from Europe that Anton Lang of Oberammergau had been killed in the great French offensive in Champagne. This came as a shock to many Americans, for the name of this wonderful character who had inspired people of all shades of opinion and religious belief in his masterful impersonation of Christ in the decennial Passion Play was almost as well known in the United States and in England as in his native Bavaria, and better I found, than in Prussia.

British and American tourist agencies had put Oberammergau on the map of the world. The interest in America after the Passion Play of 1910 was so great, in fact, that some newspapers ran extensive series of illustrated articles describing it. The man who played the part of Christ was idealized, everybody who had seen him liked him, respected him, and admired him. Thousands had said that somehow a person felt better after he had seen Anton Lang. As a supreme test of his popularity, American vaudeville managers asked him to name his own terms for a theatrical tour.

And now the man who had imbued his life with that of the Prince of Peace had thrown the past aside, and with the spiked helmet in place of the Crown of Thorns had gone to his death trying not to save but to slaughter his fellow-men.

Truly, the changes wrought by war are great!

In Berlin I inquired into the circumstances of Anton Lang's death. Nobody knew anything definite. Berlin knew little of him in life, much less than London, New York, or Montreal.

Munich is different. There his name is a household word. Herr von Meinel, then Director of the Bavarian Ministry, now member of the Bundesrat, told me that he believed that there was a mistake in the report that Anton had been killed.

Later, when tramping through the Bavarian Highlands, I walked one winter day from Partenkirchen to Oberammergau, for I had a whim to know the truth of the matter.

The road ahead was now in shadow, but behind me the mountain mass was dazzling white in the rays of the setting sun. "What a pity," I thought, "that the peasant must depart from these beautiful mountains and valleys to die in the slime of the trenches."

The day was closing in quiet and grandeur, yet all the time the shadow of death was darkening the peaceful valley of the Ammer. I became aware of it first as I passed the silent churchyard with its gray stones rising from the snow. For there, on the other side of the old stone wall that marks the road, was a monument on which the Reaper hacks the toll of death. The list for 1870 was small, indeed, compared with that of *die grosse Zeit*. I looked for Lang and found it, for Hans had died, as had also Richard.

I passed groups of men cutting wood and hauling ice and grading roads, men with rounder faces and flatter noses than the Bavarians, still wearing the yellowish-brown uniform of Russia. That is, most of them wore it. Some, whose uniforms had long since gone to tatters, were dressed in ordinary clothing, with flaming red R's painted on trousers and jackets.

An old woman with a heavy basket on her back was trudging past a group of these. "How do you like them?" I asked. "We shall really miss them when they go," she said. "They seem part of the village now. The poor fellows, it must be sad for them so far from home."

Evidently the spirit of new Germany had not saturated her.

I went through crooked streets, bordered with houses brightly frescoed with biblical scenes, to the *Pension Daheim*, the home of the man I wished to see. As he rose from his pottery bench to welcome me, I felt that beneath his great blue apron and rough garb

of the working man was true nobility. I did not need to ask if he was Anton Lang. I had seen his picture and had often been told that his face was the image of His Who died on the Cross. I expected much, but found infinitely more. I felt that life had been breathed into a Rubens masterpiece. No photograph can do him justice, for no lens can catch the wondrous light in his clear blue eyes.

I was the only guest at the *Pension Daheim*; indeed, I was the only stranger in Oberammergau. I sat beside Anton Lang in his work-room as his steady hands fashioned things of clay, I ate at table with him, and in the evening we pulled up our chairs to the comfortable fireside, where we talked of his country and of my country, of the Passion Play and of the war.

I had been sceptical about him until I met him. I wondered if he was self-conscious about his goodness, or if he was a dreamer who could not get down to the realities of this world, or if he had been spoiled by flattery, or if piety was part of his profession.

When I finally went from there I felt that I really understood him. His life has been without an atom of reproach, yet he never poses as pious. He does not preach or stand aloof, or try to make you feel that he is better than you, but down in your heart you know that he is. He has been honored by royalty and men of state, yet he remains simple and unaffected, though quietly dignified in manner. He is truly Nature's Nobleman, with a mind that is pure and a face the mirror of his mind.

To play well his rôle of Christus is the dominating passion of his life. Not the make-up box, but his own thoughts must mould his features for the rôle, which has been his in 1890, 1900, and 1910.

His travels include journeys to Rome and to the Holy Land. He is well read, an interesting talker, and an interested listener. He commented upon the great change in the spirit of the people, a change from the intoxicating enthusiasm of victory to a war-weary feeling of trying to hold out through a sense of duty. To my question as to when he thought the war would end, he answered: "When Great Britain and Germany both realize that each must make concessions. Neither can crush the other."

The doctrine that "only through hate can the greatest obstacles in life be overcome" has not reached his home, nor was there hanging on the wall, as in so many German homes, the famous order of the day of Crown Prince Rupert of Bavaria, which commences with "Soldiers of the army! Before you are the

English!" in which he exhorts his troops with all the tricky sophistry of hate.

Anton Lang has worked long hard hours to bring up his family, rather than accept fabulous offers for a theatrical tour of America. He refused these offers through no mere caprice.

"I admit that the temptation is great," he said to me. "Here I must always work hard and remain poor; there I quickly could have grown rich. But the Passion Play is not a business," he continued earnestly. "Nearly three hundred years ago, when a terrible plague raged over the land, the people of Oberammergau vowed to Almighty God that if He would save their village, they would perform every ten years in His glory the Passion of His Divine Son. The village was saved and Oberammergau has kept its promise. You see, if I had accepted those theatrical offers I could never again live in my native village, and that would break my heart."

There is carefully preserved in the town hall at Oberammergau an old chronicle which tells of the plague. There will undoubtedly be preserved in the family of Lang a new chronicle, a product of the war, printed in another country, a chronicle which did not rest content with a notice of Anton's obituary, but told the details of his death in battle.

Frau Lang showed me this chronicle. She seemed to have something on her mind of which she wished to speak, after I told her that I was an American journalist. At length one evening, after the three younger children had gone to bed, and the eldest was industriously studying his lessons for the next day, she ventured. "American newspapers tell stories which are not at all true, don't they?" she half stated, half asked.

My natural inclination was to defend American journalism by attacking that of Germany, but something restrained me, I did not know what. "Of course," I explained, "in a country such as ours where the Press is free, evils sometimes arise. We have all kinds of newspapers. A few are very yellow, but the vast majority seek to be accurate, for accuracy pays in the long run in self-respecting journalism." I thought that perhaps she was referring to the announcement of the death of the man who was sitting with us in the room. We both agreed, however, that such a mistake was perfectly natural since two Langs of Oberammergau had already been killed. In fact, Anton had read of his own death notice in a Munich paper. The American correspondent who had cabled the news on two occasions had presumably simply "lifted" the announcement from the

German papers.—From "The Land of Deepening Shadow."

AN INDIGNATION MEETING OF BIRDS

A TRUE STORY

Much has been said on reasoning by animals. Of the fact there can be no doubt; of its nature too little is known. But I think less still is known of the emotions of animals. Take an affectionate dog; how he suffers from jealousy! Our little Prince was completely miserable in his mistress took the neighbor's baby on her lap.

Several times I have been an eye-witness to emotions of a high order among birds—namely, sympathy with other birds in distress.

When a college student I was taken very ill in my sophomore year, and gaining strength but slowly, the doctor ordered me into the country.

I boarded at a farmhouse, and gave myself entirely up to the woods and fields.

Through an entire summer I studied lovingly the ways of the birds and determined to raise some young thrushes and take them with me to my city home in the fall.

My selection was a nest of brown thrushes. It was in a thick mass of bushes in a swamp—an entanglement of wild growth, and almost impenetrable.

Every day I watched, from the eggs to the callow young. I resolved to allow the old birds two weeks; then I would assume the raising of the young ones.

At last the day came, and all my preparations were made. Taking with me a cage, I worked my way through the dense undergrowth. Very carefully I removed the nest, and was trying to get it into the cage, when the female bird arrived. She uttered a cry, almost a shriek, and disappeared, but returned immediately with her mate.

The two birds made a wild effort to drive me away, even flying at me, with every demonstration of rage and distress. Then, to my surprise, they both left.

I now felt so mean that I at once set about putting the nest back in the bushes, but it gave me a good deal of trouble, as I could not make it stay in its place.

What now? The two old birds were back, accompanied with a whole bevy of

wild birds. The entire coppice was alive with them. They seemed bent on picking my eyes out. I had to screen my face by holding the cage before it.

As to these birds—their number, and variety, and conduct—all together, it was an extraordinary scene. It seemed to me there were at least fifty of these indignant little bodies, and perhaps a dozen species, some flying at me, and all making angry demonstrations.

There were brown thrushes, song thrushes, cat-birds, and several of the warblers. Such an uproar—mewing, shrieking, twittering, and other cries, a babel of bird sounds! It all meant distress and rage. But such a mix-up! All talked at once. The one keynote of the discord was distress and indignation.

I got out of that swamp a wiser and a better youth. *My conscience smote me, and my only solace lay in the thought that I had done my best to undo the mischief I had wrought.*

The next morning I again went to the swamp to see how matters stood. How softly I worked my way through the bushes! How deathly still everything was! The young birds had gone. I did so want to know how the old birds had managed matters, and how it fared with the little ones.

That indignation meeting of the birds occurred a great many years ago; but the scene is still vivid to my mind.

—*Samuel Lockwood.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

BEHEADINGS.

I am a word of five letters and mean a cereal grass and its grain.

Behead, and I am a word meaning single course in a race.

Behead, and I mean to chew and swallow.

Behead, and I become a preposition.

Behead, and I am a consonant.

II.

LABYRINTH OF LETTERS.

H	T	D	Y	R	N	N	A	L	E	O
O	R	O	D	O	E	R	P	O	B	N
A	E	E	E	R	H	E	A	N	O	E
U	T	H	P	A	R	K	P	A	R	T

By beginning at a certain letter, and following a path, using no letter twice, the names of three persons born in the months of July and August will be spelled.

III.

REVERSIBLE WORDS.

Reverse a word by spelling it backwards and by so doing form another word. Next week's paper will give these reversals. See if you can get them right:

1. Reverse a division of a hospital and find the movable part of a drawbridge. (Example: Ward—draw.)

2. Reverse to vaunt and get clothing in general.

3. Reverse to whip soundly and make a popular game.

4. Reverse a station of the Israelites on their way to Mt. Sinai and make a distance.

—*Exchange.*

IV.

FIVE MIXED PROVERBS.

There's a merrier bird will leap in the new bush before where you look a way. There's the clean A broom in a hand is worth the two sweeps the more.

—*Selected.*

Answers to puzzles in the June number.

I. REARRANGEMENTS: 1. Wander, warden, we darn, war, Ned. 2. Myra, army.

II. TWISTED PRESIDENTS: 1. Cleveland. 2. Van Buren. 3. Harrison. 4. Buchanan. 5. Roosevelt. 6. Wilson. 7. Jefferson. 8. Garfield. 9. Washington. 10. Johnson.

III. MIXED WORD SQUARE:

DROP
RAGE
OGRE
PEER

IV. A WHEEL: Jargon, Jacket, Jangle, Jasper, Jennet, Jesuit, Jocese, Jungle.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is now 633 Third Street, North, St. Petersburg, Florida.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper

location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be discontinued through the summer months.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers, in its *Home Study Work*, to send lessons to anyone who wishes. We can help teachers at home for higher grades, or others who cannot continue their school studies. Lessons will be given in all subjects. Please apply to Mrs. Elmer E. Hudson, 5 Alveston Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. Hubert Pope, 39 Kennebec Street, West Roxbury, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss Freeman Clarke.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nicholson, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.